

# Valley Arts Initiative

## Review Process and Conflict of Interest Policy

### ***Review Process***

SCVF staff review all proposals for completeness and eligibility. Prior to a review meeting, panelists review all applications and score proposals based on the funding criteria. They are instructed to score proposals based on the proposal itself and to not contact or discuss a pending application with an applicant prior to a review meeting. Panelists are also assigned specific applications to present at the review meeting.

A review meeting begins by each applicant declaring a conflict of interest if one occurs. During the meeting the panelists discuss the proposals and may adjust their scores. The scores are then compiled, ranked and allocation decisions are made considering ranking, amount available to grant and geographic distribution of grantees. A recommendation is then made to the Foundation's Board of Directors for approval at the next board or executive committee meeting.

Review meetings are open to the public and minimally are announced in local newspapers. Applicants are encouraged to attend.

### ***Conflict of Interest Policy***

A conflict of interest represents any circumstance when a member of the Foundation's Board of Directors, or a reviewer on a grant review panel, is associated to an organization applying for a grant (e.g., as a trustee, director, board member or officer) or when that person, or a member of their family, would financially benefit from a grant award. Members of the Foundation's Board, as well as grant review panelists, should be upfront about their ability to judge an application objectively. The perception of conflict should also be considered and avoided.

***Grant Review Panel:*** In the event a member the Foundation's Board of Directors, or other members of the grant review panel, have a conflict of interest with an organization applying for a grant, the reviewer will withdraw from all discussion concerning that application. The St. Croix Valley Foundation will ask panel members to declare any possible conflict of interest at the start of the review panel meeting.

- Subject to the policy stated above, panel members are not prohibited from maintaining membership in organizations applying for grants; and such membership does not, by itself, preclude service on the Foundation's grant review panel provided there is full, open and appropriate disclosure in all situations.

***Final Board Approval:*** In the event a member the Foundation's Board of Directors also serves as a trustee, director, board member or officer of an organization applying for a grant, the director shall withdraw from any final award decision affecting that application, nor attempt to exert any influence on the applicant's behalf.

- Subject to the policy stated above, Board members are not prohibited from maintaining membership in organizations applying for grants; and such membership does not, by itself, preclude service on the Board of Directors or participation in any of its activities provided there is full, open and appropriate disclosure both annually and in all specific situations.